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SECURITY INFORMATION

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

8 June 1953

SUBJECT: PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE: SE-
ESTIMATE ON "WHETHER TIME IS ON OUR SIDE".

THE PROBLEM

To estimate the probable development of the overall power position of the Soviet Bloc relative to that of the West over the next 10-15 years.

ASSUMPTIONS

1. No general war.
2. Continuation of present programs and policies of both the Bloc and the Western powers throughout the period.

QUESTIONS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

I. THE PRESENT RELATIONSHIP OF POWER BETWEEN EAST AND WEST

This very brief section would be designed only to serve as the point of departure. It would tot up, in the most general way, the relative strengths and weaknesses of East and West. Perhaps in the final paper this section would be unnecessary and could be woven into the succeeding sections.

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II. PROBABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SOVIET BLOC AND THE WEST

This section should examine not only the most likely projection of trends but also the significant contingencies (e.g. depression) which would affect these projections.

- A. Probable Growth in GNP; also probable rate of growth at various points and at end of period.
- B. Probable Growth in Capabilities to Sustain a Global War.
This may be quite different from A above. It should include relative capabilities to mobilize resources.
- C. Major Contingencies which might affect overall Economic Outlook -- in both the Bloc and the West. Such factors as depressions, continued blockage of free world trade, possible technological developments, etc. might be discussed.
- D. Summary. Probable relative economic strength of Bloc and West in short term and at end of period. Also comparative rates of growth.

III. PROBABLE TRENDS IN THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL STRENGTH AND COHESION OF THE SOVIET BLOC AND THE WEST

This section will probably be the most difficult to write. It should project, in general terms, the outlines of likely political and social changes of major import during the period, and include not only probable developments within the Soviet and Western spheres of influence but also the likely course of the cold war. The following questions are by no means exhaustive.

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- A. Probable trends in the strength, unity, and cohesion of the Western Alliance. Likely development of WE strength, unity, and cohesion? Possible development of a European Third Force? Likely growth and role of Germany as partner of West, general political and social health of Western countries, impact of a major depression, role of US, future role of Japan? Future strength and capabilities of Western Communist parties? Future vulnerability to Soviet "cold war" tactics?
- B. Probable trends in the strength, unity, and cohesion of the Soviet Bloc. Likelihood of totalitarian regime maintaining its hold; possibility of struggle for power; future relations between USSR and Commie China, etc.? Future vulnerability to Western "cold war" moves?
- C. Probable trends in strength and alignment of "third" areas. Here we might discuss those countries which are at present neither East nor West, the probable future role of India and the Southeast Asian countries, the likely outcome of the anti-colonial revolution in the Near East and Africa. How will developments in these areas affect the overall balance of power between East and West?

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D. Probable developments in the cold war, insofar as they might affect the balance of power. This may be a controversial section, but it is easily conceivable that the very intensity or lack of intensity of the cold war (as pressed by either side) could affect the strength, unity, resolution, and alignment of various important countries. The policy which the USSR and US pursue (assuming a continuation of present policies) will have a major impact on the future balance of power.

IV. PROBABLE OVERALL MILITARY DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOVIET BLOC AND THE WEST

This section will have to draw on all the others. We will have to avoid detailed and probably meaningless figures and confine ourselves to major shifts from the situation today.

A. Probable Technological Developments and their Impact on Strategic Vulnerability. This section may be essential to set the stage -- to define the overall context in which we must examine relative military capabilities. It should include a projection of the relative technological capabilities of the Bloc and the West, with emphasis on atomic and thermonuclear weapons. Possibility of technological breakthrough on either side or both.

B. Probable Trends in Soviet Bloc Strength, Capabilities, and Vulnerabilities, with emphasis on unconventional weapons.

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C. Probable Trends in Western Strength, Capabilities, and Vulnerabilities, with emphasis on unconventional weapons.

V. SUMMARY COMPARISON -- "Time is on the side which uses it best."

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